



TOWN OF BERWYN HEIGHTS

Prince George's County, Maryland

Incorporated in 1896 ~ Sixth Oldest Municipality in PG County

WORKSESSION MINUTES APRIL 20, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Cheye Calvo, Mayor Pro Tem (MPT) Jodie Kulpa-Eddy and Councilmembers (CMs) Patricia Der and Anthony Schreiber. CM Chris Rasmussen had an excused absence. Also present was Town Administrator (TA) Jessica Cowles, Director of Public Works A Lockley and Clerk Kerstin Harper.

1. MAYOR

Announcements: CM Schreiber's Men's League basketball team did not advance to the next round of the championship.

Calendar: The May 21 PGMA meeting taking place in Berwyn Heights was added to the calendar.

Minutes: On a motion by CM Dennison and second by MPT Kulpa-Eddy the March 23 budget worksession minutes were approved 4 to 0.

Department Reports: MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported that she and CM Dennison attended County Councilmember Danielle Glaros' Town Hall meeting. County Executive Baker and PGCPD CEO Maxwell were present to explain the rationales and objectives for the County's FY 2016 budget and the proposed 15 cents tax increase to education. She provided a packet of handouts available at the meeting to the Council for information. A meeting on the Prince George's County zoning rewrite will place next Monday in College Park.

Mayor Calvo reported that he will attend another Route 1 Coalition meeting next week. The Greenbelt Middle School Talented & Gifted (TAG) program, which admission by lottery, did not admit any students from Berwyn Heights Elementary School (BHES) this year. When the TAG program was implemented, local students were promised guaranteed seats. In addition, Berwyn Heights students complete the 6th grade at Berwyn Heights and do not enter Greenbelt Middle School until 7th grade, which contributes to overcrowding at BHES and adjustment problems at the middle school, which may require a restructuring of the transition process. He discussed these issues with School Board Representative Lupi Grady.

Further, an accident on the Metro Green Line damaged the pedestrian bridge. Metro contractors building the test track caused the partial collapse with a construction crane. The construction of the test track, including the control station on Balley Avenue are on hold until an investigation has been completed. A re-opening of the bridge is not expected until 6 to 8 months. CM Dennison noted that Councilmembers traditionally serve the pancake breakfast on Berwyn Heights Day.

Citizen Comments: Mayor Calvo received a comments regarding speeding on Osage Street and the danger posed to children playing there. There was increased interest from residents in the community garden this spring. All plots have been assigned. The fitness boot camp sponsored by the Green Team, started last September and received high marks from participants.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported that she received many comments on the County budget from members of the NW/EP during the clean-up of the emergency trailer. She received an inquiry as to why the Code car does not have license plate in front.

Four Cities agenda: Mayor Calvo said that the proposed agenda is already full. School Board Representative Lupi Grady, and CEO Kevin Maxwell's representatives Monica Goldson are scheduled for presentations, and County Councilmember Chair Mel Franklin has expressed interest in discussing the County's FY 2016 budget, and other agenda items. No items were added for Berwyn Heights.

2. PUBLIC WORKS

Road repair planning: Mayor Calvo welcomed Director of Public Works Lockley for a presentation on street repairs. Director Lockley began with an overview of current conditions of the Town's streets, using a map showing when particular blocks were repaved. There are a couple of blocks that have not been resurfaced since 1988, including the 8500 blocks of 63rd Avenue and Cunningham Drive. Most other streets were last repaved in the early and mid 1990s and are near the end of expected life span. Generally, road pavement lasts between 15 to 20 years, or longer with good maintenance. Former State highways, which include Pontiac and parts of 58th and 57th Avenue and Berwyn Road, plus recently rebuilt sections of Ruatan and Seminole Streets, are equipped with 6" underdrains. This prevents erosion of curbs and gutters from stormwater runoff.

Director Lockley continued with an explanation of the Prince George's County specifications for roads, which differ between primary and secondary roads. There are just a couple of primary roads in Town, including Pontiac Street and Edmonston Road, which are wider and built for heavier traffic. They require a 6" sub-base opposed to a 4" sub-base for secondary roads. A 3" base course of asphalt, topped with a 1/5" intermediate surface course and another 1.5" final surface course then be applied to both primary and secondary roads. To prevent rippling of asphalt at stop signs caused by bus traffic a cement bus pad should be installed.

A recent evaluation of the condition of Town streets by a contractor showed that most streets in Berwyn Heights are structurally sound. Those in the best condition comprising approximately 1/2 of all streets, will not have to be resurfaced until 15 to 20 years from now at an estimated cost of \$1,254,000 for mill and overlay. Another group of streets in fair condition comprises about a 1/3 of Town streets and should be resurfaced in 10-15 years. The cost of resurfacing them is estimated at \$900,000. About 1/10 of Town streets are not in good shape and should be resurfaced within 5-8 years. They include the 6100 block of Quebec Place, Villanova and the 8400 and 8500 block of 58th Avenue. The cost to repair them is estimated at \$201,800. A small portion of Town streets are in bad condition and may require rebuilding of the sub-base. They should be resurfaced within the next 1-3 years. The streets in that category include the 6300 block of Seminole Street, 6200 block of Quebec Place, the 8500 and 8300 block of Cunningham Drive, the 5700 block of Nevada Street and the 8300 block of 58th Avenue. The cost to mill and overlay them is estimated at \$171,400. However, additional cost may be incurred if the sub-base has to be rebuilt.

Director Lockley outlined options for maintaining Town streets until they can be resurfaced. These include hot mix asphalt patching for localized areas of disintegration, "slurry seals" to fill and cover surface defects over a larger area of the existing pavement; and crack sealing to fill and seal individual cracks in their early stages of deterioration. The Public Works Department has performed crack sealing in house in recent years but has found it is better to hire a vendor to do the work because they have the equipment to keep the asphalt mix hot.

Next, Director Lockley would find out if the Town can borrow an Automated Road Analyzer from the SHA, and if so, use it to determine the condition of the streets below the surface. This would be a great help in getting cost estimates for repairs, as well as engineering subsequent street projects. Once a project is initiated, patches requiring a rebuilding of the sub-base should be addressed first. On some blocks, such as the 6200 block of Seminole Street, it may make sense to rebuild and replace the entire road bed because there is too much damage to the sub-base. In conclusion, the cost of mill and overlay of all Town streets is estimated to be \$2.5 million.

At 8:25 p.m., the Council took a 10 minute break.

Mayor Calvo thanked Director Lockley for providing this very useful framework for future street repairs. In addition to the cost of mill and overlay, there is the cost of rebuilding of curbs and gutters, which may, or may not be done in conjunction with resurfacing. Based on the information just presented, Mayor Calvo thought it makes sense to take on the roads rated in bad and pretty bad condition (marked in blue and orange on an accompanying map) first. This is projected to cost approximately \$400,000, plus any repairs to the sub-base and possibly to curbs and gutters. There is enough money in the infrastructure reserve to add even some blocks in fair condition (marked red) to the next project.

Mayor Calvo continued that Director Lockley should think about any needed curb and gutter work that could be done now by the contractor who is working on the roads.

sidewalks now. Some curb and gutter repairs are already budgeted as part of this sidewalks contract but other areas might be added, particularly if they are on that would be included in the next street project. In addition, there are bus pads to be installed and old sidewalks to be repaired. The sidewalks contractor should be asked for an estimate on all those things.

In response to questions, Director Lockley said that most of Branchville Road was recently resurfaced but it is dirty because trucks haul dirt and construction material on it. Mayor Calvo added that the developers probably had it resurfaced, but as a County Road it is the responsibility of the County to maintain. For the most part streets rated in poor condition do not overlap with the WSSC water main replacement project, with the exception of parts of Osage Street and 58th Avenue.

Dump truck purchase: Director Lockley explained that since he last presented quotes to replace a 1 ton dump truck, he has narrowed the options down and recommends getting an F350 gasoline powered, 4 wheel drive dump truck with a stainless steel dump body and tail gate spreader and 8 1/2 foot wide snow plow. The price for this package is \$58,700 as opposed to the \$51,300 package he previously quoted, but is expected to make this truck more durable over the long-term. The truck is better equipped for snow plowing and salt spreading operations. There are additional uplifting costs of \$2,300 for communications, strobe lights and shock absorbers for the plow, bringing the total cost to a little over \$61,000.

Mayor Calvo proposed to shift \$10,000 appropriated in this year's budget for a speed monitor to pay for the added cost of the truck package Director Lockley described. He has decided not to buy the speed monitor for the Police Department, which frees this money up for the truck purchase. CM Schreiber moved and MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded to authorize the purchase of the dump truck in the manner discussed. The motion passed 4 to 0.

3. ADMINISTRATION

Sidewalks project update: TA Cowles briefed the Council on the progress of the priority 1 sidewalks project. She said that approximately 10,000 of 15,600 square feet of sidewalks have been laid. This makes the sidewalks installation 64% complete but it does not account for the stormwater management improvements in the Public Works yard. The sidewalks contract is for \$421,000 of which nearly \$192,000, or 45% has been spent. Change orders account for approximately \$7,000 in additional costs, but some \$6,000 is expected to be recouped for items included in the contract but not needed. Separate engineering costs were budgeted at \$34,000 of which \$25,000 has been spent.

Construction on the 8600 block of Cunningham Drive has been complicated by sloping ground and required a few adjustments in the plans. At 8623 Cunningham Drive a longer driveway is necessary to conform with Prince George's County specs of a maximum allowable grade of 10%. After excavation, it became apparent that a retaining wall was needed on the property to save a magnolia tree. An easement agreement was drafted for Council's approval to allow temporary access for construction and grading. The agreement also commits the Town to remove the Magnolia tree if it dies within a year after construction. The owner will be responsible for replanting.

At 8901 60th Avenue, where the lead walk was to be reoriented to provide access to the house from Seminole Street, the owner has recently asked if an apron could be built where a planned driveway would be built off 60th Avenue. The apron was not programmed as part of the project and would cost an additional \$1,500.

Mayor Calvo said that the Town spent \$3,600 to reorient the lead walk to compensate this homeowner for the loss of parking on 60th Avenue. If the owner now wants to add a driveway on 60th Avenue, he will have to pay for the cost of the apron. Further, plans and a permit would have to be prepared very quickly because contractors are already constructing sidewalks on the 8800 block of 60th Avenue. However, TA Cowles has the authority to work something out with the homeowner provided it does not add to the cost of or hold up progress on the project.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked what has been done about the front entrance of Pop's Park. TA Cowles said that the engineers have drawn up a new schematic for the sidewalk leading to the front entrance. The sidewalks will be replaced at the contractors cost at a higher level so that the height differential from the sidewalk to the interior of the park is not as great. This will also reduce the size of retaining walls needed along the sidewalk and the lead walk. In response to CM Schreiber, Mayor Calvo confirmed that the Council had planned to put up iron railings in the green strip in front of this gate to prevent children from running out into the road.

TA Cowles recommended formal approval of the easement at 8623 Cunningham Drive. CM Schreiber so moved. CM Dennison seconded. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Bikeway signage plan: Clerk Harper presented a signage plan as part of the Town bikeways project funded by a 2014 Maryland Heritage Areas grant. The plan includes two different types of signs:

1. Wayfinding signs help out-of-Town bicyclists and tourists to find their way through the town to destinations in neighboring communities. The signs use Anacostia Trails Heritage Association (ATHA) templates and identify the demarcated route as a part of the Anacostia Trails system.
2. Interpretive signs feature a regional and a local map, showing points of interest, and describing the Town of Berwyn Heights in the context of its heritage.

Clerk Harper reviewed the proposed locations and content of 8 individual wayfinding signs that will be posted at points where bicycle routes divide or where directions are needed. The Council gave feedback and made the following points: Directions to Greenbelt Metro Station should include a Metro symbol; each sign should include a distant destination; signs should note only the name of a neighboring city, but not a neighborhood within it; signs should reference shopping and food generally, not a particular mall or business; signs should not indicate destinations leading car drivers to places that can only be reached by bike. The exact location of a sign at the intersection of Greenbelt Road and 58th Avenue pointing to Greenbelt Station, and at the intersection of Pontiac Street and 63rd Avenue pointing to Greenbelt Middle School need further thought.

Clerk Harper explained that interpretive maps feature a regional, and a local map, as well as a "Welcome to Berwyn Heights" message. She provided four locations for interpretive signs, of which two or three might be selected. Mayor Calvo commented that the maps take in too large an area and therefore do not provide enough detail about the Town. The number of points of interest featured on the local map could be reduced and their description shortened. Clerk Harper was asked to find out if ATHA can make those changes to the template. No decision on the signage plan as a whole was made. Discussion of bike racks and bike repair station was postponed.

4. CODE COMPLIANCE

Commercial Clean Lot Ordinance amendments: TA Cowles gave an overview of the changes she made to Ordinance 134 since the last discussion. In addition to providing a zoning map indicating the permitted land uses and limitations for each zone within the Town of Berwyn Heights. The amended Ordinance adopted the International Building Code and Maryland Rehabilitation Code as codes of the Town of Berwyn Heights, as applicable to the commercial, industrial and mixed-use properties. Several exemptions apply. Abandoned or non-road worthy vehicles may be stored at a commercial or industrial property if the property is a motor vehicle inspection or repair station, and may be parked on unpaved surfaces if the County zoning ordinance permits it. Similarly, building materials and motor vehicles may be stored on a commercial property if permitted by the County zoning ordinance. A standard for construction safety was added in Section 6 - Violations, Section 7 - Construction Safety and Stop Work Orders was deleted. Stop work orders are normally addressed through Ordinance 104 - Building. Lastly, the timeframe for notice of violations and penalties set forth in Section 9 E, were imported from the residential Clean Lot Ordinance, but may need further refinement.

Mayor Calvo commented on the timeframes for enforcing violations. He questioned whether a vehicle parked on an unapproved parking surface, such as dirt or gravel, deserves an immediate fine. The County zoning code may provide an exemption for certain types of businesses. The Town would only issue an immediate fine if a business does not have an exemption. The immediate fine for this violation was retained.

Further, Mayor Calvo proposed to collapse the time sensitive and regular order enforcement schedules and apply a 7 day period from a notice of a violation to the issuance of fine. There was no objection. For structural violations, such as building security hazards or grading issues, a 30 day time frame for submitting a plan to correct the violation was agreed upon. For repeat violations, 18 months was set as the frame of reference. For abatements, 10 days from the first notice of a violation was proposed as the trigger for the Town to be able to enter a property and abate a violation. However, violations for which immediate or time sensitive enforcement schedules apply, a 1 day abatement period might be warranted. A decision on the matter was postponed to the next worksession.

Nothing was discussed under **6. Public Safety.**

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION (11:00 P.M - 11:45 P.M.)

On a motion by CM Dennison and second by MPT Kulpa-Eddy, the Council went into executive session to discuss a personnel matter. With matter approved, CM Dennison moved and MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded to end the executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

Signed: *Kerstin Harper, Town Clerk*

Copyright © Town of Berwyn Heights.